



The State of New Hampshire
Department of Environmental Services



Michael P. Nolin
Commissioner

January 31, 2006

The Honorable Lawrence C. Ross, Chairman
N.H. House of Representatives
Science, Technology and Energy Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 304
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

Re: HB 1425, An act establishing the commission to study the efficacy of current laws in reducing exposure of children to lead

Dear Chairman Ross and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on behalf of the Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) in support of HB 1425, which seeks to establish a commission to study the efficacy of current laws in reducing exposure of children to lead. NHDES has long recognized that environmental hazards such as lead can have a major impact on the health and life of children in New Hampshire, and we have always worked diligently to reduce and eliminate toxic substances in the environment that represent significant public health risks. In fact, NHDES' mission statement lists "protecting public health" as one of our primary responsibilities.

Lead is a highly toxic substance that can produce a wide range of adverse health effects to both adults and children at sufficient levels of exposure. We recognize that exposure to poorly maintained leaded paint in older homes is by far the largest source of childhood lead poisoning in the state, and that the New Hampshire Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (CLPPP) at DHHS is the principal state agency responsible for the prevention, screening, diagnosis, and treatment of lead poisoning due to lead paint exposure. However, we also recognize that there may be other environmental sources of lead that could also play a role in contributing to a child's overall body burden, and we feel that the commission formed as a result of this bill will allow NHDES and the state to better identify, understand and address those areas where NHDES can play a part.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer our support for HB 1425. Please call me at 271-3503 if you have any questions or would like further information.

Sincerely,


Michael P. Nolin
Commissioner